

Turkey's Lost Provinces.

THE TURK AND HIS LOST PROVINCES: GREECE, BULGARIA, SERBIA, BOSNIA. By William Eleroy Curtis. Cloth, decorated cover. Pp. 306. Illustrated. New York and Chicago: The Fleming H. Revell Company.

The deprecation of the Sultan is by no means novel. George Dorys's "The Private Life of the Sultan" left its impression on American readers. Abdul Hamid never is lauded, and Mr. William Eleroy Curtis in "The Turk and His Lost Provinces" has nothing to say favorable about him. The lost provinces, as far as Turkey is concerned, are Greece, Bulgaria, Servia, and Bosnia. The author calls Russia and Greece "the only sympathetic nations," and he adds that "they belong to the same race and profess the same religion." Many might question the race subject. That the Czar would at once side with the Macedonians seems positive, only there are restraints put on his action due to the jealousies of Austria, Germany, and England. Nor is France to be overlooked in the matter.

To assuage the unfortunate turmoil in the Balkan Peninsula Mr. Curtis intimates that Austria might settle it, and cites her excellent management of affairs in Bosnia. Could she exercise a protectorate over Servia, Bulgaria, Macedonia? But then Germany, England, and Russia would never permit such a thing. The blame, he insists, should rest on Germany, "because its Government sustains and protects the Sultan in his atrocious policy of administration not alone in Macedonia, but in all parts of the Near East." Turks must not govern Christians—that is the constant theme. The stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin have never been fulfilled by the Turks, nor will they ever be. As to the people not the followers of the Prophet who live in the Balkan States, we follow Mr. Curtis. "They are not fit to govern themselves." The difficulties are immense, and what is to be the outcome no one can even surmise. One element of trouble, the one often overlooked, is the inherent dislike the Orthodox Russian has for the Roman Church. The most incomprehensible idea is that Switzerland or Holland or Denmark might better the conditions of the Balkans by becoming protectors.

Leaving aside all the political aspects as far as relates to foreign intervention, Mr. Curtis describes the present status of the Turkish Government. It is all centred in the Sultan. "There are no political parties in Turkey; there are no political issues. It is all a question of obtaining the Sultan's favor, and the entire Mohammedan population is divided into two classes—the ruling favorites and those who have been discarded. The outside population take no interest. They are glad to be let alone." Mr. Curtis mentions something which will surprise many, that is if his interpretation is correct. All the foreign embassies at Constantinople have their steam yachts or guardboats, as they are called, in immediate proximity to their legations. If the Moslems should in one of their fanatical outbreaks endeavor to massacre all the Christians then, as in Peking, the Ambassadors might be in danger, and so the special guardboats would be found convenient. The exception is the American Legation, and it does not "have a yacht for the use of its Minister at anchor near the Custom House."

Were it not for the innumerable tragedies in the Balkan States, their Governments, when they have any of their own, have some of the elements of a comic opera. As to the honesty of the patriots of the Balkan provinces, their integrity may be questioned. Brigandage always has existed, and as a profession there seems to be no obloquy attached to it. The kidnapping of Miss Stone is fully described. What is strange about this rascality is the present apparent forgetfulness of the topic. In the volume there is found a list of the persons not natives who have been kidnapped and the demands made in money for their release.

It is pleasant to learn of the wise administration of the Austrians in Bosnia. All industries have wonderfully increased, and a country once in woeful distress has been saved from ruin. And to learn that every year before the Austrian intervention there were from 8,000 to 10,000 souls murdered there every year! This wholesale killing, Mr. Curtis writes, will remain continuous in Macedonia and Eastern Roumalla "so long as the powers of Europe permit the Turks to govern that country."